

Hadji and his *charvadars* bringing up the caravan as steadily as if there were no danger ahead. Not a man showed the "white feather," though most, like myself, were "under fire" for the first time. When we reached the crest of the pass such a wild lot crowded about us, their guns yet hot from firing upon us. Such queer arms they had—one gun with a flint lock a century old, with the "Tower mark" upon it, loaded sticks, and long knives. With much talking and excitement they accompanied us to this camping-ground.<sup>1</sup>

The men varied considerably in their stories. They were frightened, they said, and fired because they thought we were come to harm them. At first I was sorry for them, and regarded them as merely defending their "hearths and homes," for in the alpine valley behind the hill are their, black tents, their families, their flocks and herds—their world, in fact. But they told another story, and said they took us for a party of Hajwands.

This was untenable, and the Agha told them that they knew that Hajwands do not ride on English saddles, and carry white umbrellas, and march with big caravans of mules. To me, when they desired my services, they said that had they known that one of the party was a *Hakim* they never would have fired.

<sup>1</sup> This untoward affair ended well, but had there been bloodshed on either side, had any one of us been killed, which easily might have been, the world would never have believed but that some offence had been given, and that some high-handed action had been the cause of the attack. I am in a position to say, not only that no offence was given,

but that here and  
everywhere the utmost care was taken not to violate  
Bakhtiari etiquette,  
or wound religious or national susceptibilities ; all supplies  
were paid for  
above their value ; the servants, always under our own  
eyes, were friendly  
but reserved; and in all dealings with the people  
kindness and justice  
were the rule. I make these remarks in the hope of  
modifying any harsh  
judgments which may be passed upon any travellers who  
have died un-  
witnessed deaths at the hands of natives. There are, as  
in our case,  
absolutely unprovoked attacks.